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WORK ON THE U. S. TOPOGRAPHIC ATLAS.

The season just closed has been an active one for the topographic office of the United States Geological Survey. The eastern division of the topographic branch has had nearly fifty parties at work in various portions of about twenty States. The greatest activity has been in the States of New York, Pennsylvania, Ohio, and West Virginia. In the central and southern States a large amount has been in progress, as also in Wisconsin, Missouri, Kentucky, and Alabama.

In New York primary triangulation or primary traverse has been extended for the control of future mapping into portions of Cattaraugus, Wyoming, and neighbouring counties, and into Lewis and St. Lawrence counties, in the northern part of the State. Many quadrangles were completed in Erie, Wyoming, Oswego, Lewis, Hamilton, Sullivan, and Orange counties. Of most interest has been the mapping of nearly all the unsurveyed portions of the western Catskills, including Slide Mountain and Ellenville quadrangles, and a large amount of preliminary work has been extended to Goshen and Port Jervis. Another interesting area is in that portion of the southern Adirondacks covered by the Piseco and Lake Pleasant quadrangles, thus practically completing the southern portion of the Adirondack survey, including the drainage of the Sacandaga River, concerning which there has been little topographic information heretofore available. That part of the State which most nearly approaches a *terra incognita*, situated in southwestern Lewis county, and covered by the Highmarket, Mexico, and Kasoag sheets, has been mapped, thus giving for the first time some definite information regarding the peculiar topographic formation of this region. It appears to be one of comparatively recent geologic origin; an upland or tableland of nearly 500 square miles, with an altitude of from 1,850 to 2,050 feet.

In Maine an interesting region about Rockland has been mapped, and lines of precise levels have been run up the entire length of the Kennebec River, determining its slope, etc., from tide-water to Moosehead Lake outlet, and up the Penobscot River from tide-water to Norcross, which is at the outlet of the Twin Lakes. Some preliminary mapping has been done also on the headwaters of the Kennebec, just below Moosehead Lake, a comparatively inaccessible country, without roads or trails, and difficult to penetrate because of the second growth following lumber operations.

In New Hampshire an important area near Nashua has been mapped, where the country has been found to be highly eroded and, in spite of dense habitation in portions, quite wild and overgrown with timber. In addition, lines of precise levels have been run from Manchester *via* Concord to Sunapee Lake, thus extending tide-water elevations into a region in which accurate determinations of height were previously unknown. In Vermont an important area has been mapped in the neighbourhood of Burlington and Essex Junction. In this region a peculiar error in the geodetic location of Mt. Philo, determined many years ago, was discovered, and a new position for this mountain ascertained. In New Jersey, in portions of Burlington, Trenton, and Mercer counties, the old State surveys have been revised by the addition of new roads and of all houses, thus bringing the condition of the topographic mapping of Burlington, Bordentown, Lambertville, and Princeton quadrangles up to date.

In Pennsylvania the field work has been prosecuted more industriously in the eastern portion of the State than heretofore. The important agricultural region about Coatsville, Phœnixville, and eastern Lancaster County has been mapped, as also an area just west of the Susquehanna River, between New Bloomfield and Millerstown in Perry and Juniata counties. The survey of the great upland region in Blair and Indiana counties has been continued, and that of the unmapped district about Pittsburg, covered by the Burgettstown, Carnegie, McKeesport, and Greensburg sheets. Primary triangulation for control of future topographic mapping has been extended into Juniata and Mifflin counties, as well as into Mercer and Crawford counties, in the northwestern part of the State.

In Delaware the Wilmington quadrangle has been mapped, and in Maryland the survey of the Eastern Shore has been completed. In addition, the Ellicott City quadrangle has been surveyed and mapped in detail, and control by primary traverse for mapping Montgomery County has been completed.

In West Virginia a large amount of topographic mapping was completed in the northwestern counties, chiefly in Tyler, West Union, Wood, Ritchie, and Taylor. This region is one of the greatest activity to be found anywhere in the country in the development of the coal, oil, and natural gas resources, all of which are here abundant. The results of the mapping will aid greatly in the study of these economic resources by geologists, and will be of great service.

In Ohio a greater amount of topographic work has been in progress than elsewhere in the United States. About ten parties have been actively engaged—some upon the extension of primary control in the eastern and northern counties, some upon the running of precise levels, to determine basal elevations, and others upon the detail of topographic mapping. The last completed about fourteen quadrangles, including areas about such cities as Lima, Springfield, Dayton, and Tiffin. In this region a contour interval of 10 feet has been used, owing to the comparative flatness of the country, and some of the resulting topographic forms are highly interesting. In the southeastern portion of the State, along the breaks of the Ohio River, the country is highly eroded, is covered with a rather heavy growth of wood, and has been found exceedingly difficult and expensive to map. In the areas surveyed in the northeastern portion of the State, in Ashtabula County in particular, many interesting facts have been developed concerning the form and position of the old lake shores.

In Kentucky quite an area of country has been mapped south and west of Owensboro, as well as a portion of the celebrated Blue Grass country in the neighbourhood of the capital, Frankfort, and of Versailles and Lawrenceburg. This is one of the most attractive pastoral regions in the United States, and has been found most agreeable to survey, both from the simplicity of the topographic forms and the delightful surroundings.

A work which will be of great economic importance, when followed by the geologic studies, has been the mapping on a large scale, and with great detail, of the important industrial region about Birmingham and Bessemer, Alabama. Previously a preliminary map had been made upon the scale of 2 miles to 1 inch, and with contours of 100-feet interval. The mapping just completed has been done on a scale of nearly 3 inches to the mile, near the cities of Birmingham and Bessemer, and throughout the country surrounding them on a scale of 1 mile to one inch, with contours of 20-feet interval. The result has been to show the detail and characteristics of the forms and the great amount of culture resulting from the mining settlements.

The survey of the region north of Baton Rouge, La., covered by the Bayou Sara quadrangle, has been completed, as has also that of the Wilkes quadrangle, in the county of that name in Georgia. A careful re-survey has been completed in the region covered by the Saluda quadrangle in the mountains of North and South Carolina, and some preliminary work looking to the future mapping of the important region about Charlotte, N. C., has been undertaken. On the coast the Hertford quadrangle, on the Albemarle Sound, has been completed, and two areas of great historic importance in tide-water Virginia, covering the region about Yorktown, Jamestown, and Williamsburg, have been mapped. This work will be of great interest in connection with the proposed Jamestown Exposition.

In Wisconsin quite an area of mapping has been completed, in much detail, about the capital city of Madison, and in the neighbourhood of Evansville, and the revision preliminary to a careful study of glacial action in southern Wisconsin has been made of the old Geneva and Silver Lake quadrangles. In North Dakota, Windemere quadrangle, covering the area between that city and Hankinson, has been completed. In Arkansas the country about Harrison, in the northern part of the State, has been mapped.

Another area of great economic importance, and one which will prove of much interest to mining engineers and economic geologists is the region covered by the Farmington and Potosi quadrangle in Missouri, the mapping of which has just been completed. In addition to the lead interests of this region a large amount of baryte is mined. The country is highly eroded, yet densely covered with a scrub growth of timber, which has rendered the work of the surveyors most difficult. W.

GEOGRAPHICAL RECORD.

AFRICA.

STUDYING THE CONGO NATIVES.—The *Bulletin* of the Royal Belgian Geographical Society has begun the publication of a series of ethnographical studies of the native population of the Congo Free State. The work has been incited by the fact that there is every prospect of considerable transformation in the customs of the natives through contact with the white races, and it is desired to record their ways of life and traditions while the opportunity still presents itself. The opening paper (Nos. 3 and 4, 1904), by Dr. Védy, deals with the A-Babuas, who live in the forested region which has the Welle River for its northern and the Bomokandi for its eastern border—a people of fine physique, who live on the